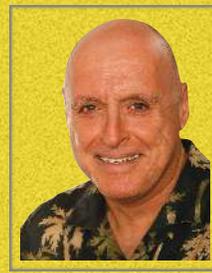


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 256 Bad Customer Service Stories Never Go Away

Do you think people complaining about bad customer service is a relatively new thing, say the last 100 or 200 years? I think you're going to be surprised. I'm Jerry Roberts, and today we're going to go back to reveal what is quite possibly the first documented buyer complaint, next, on The Extra Point.

Before Facebook popped up some 15 years ago, when people got upset with you they used "word of mouth" advertising to tell others what they thought of your organization. One person telling another. It's been said that when someone has a good experience they tell 2-3 people; and when things go wrong they tell about 11.

Of course, customer service complaints aren't new by any means, and if you make a buyer mad today you stand a pretty good chance of getting flamed on social media. If the story is juicy enough it can go viral and in a place like Guam, it doesn't take long before thousands of island residents hear about it.

I started thinking about what it might have been like in the U.S. in the 1800s, when cowboys and six-shooters ruled the West. Making a customer mad then could have had dire consequences.

You can go back four centuries before Jesus to find laws where cheating a customer in the Roman Empire could result in crucifixion. The Law of Moses, in Old Testament times, called for perpetrators of some seemingly minor crimes to be stoned to death. It sort of makes anything that happens on Facebook look pretty good by comparison, doesn't it?

And then I found a story of what might well have been the very first recorded instance of a customer lodging a complaint. The British Museum in London has in its possession an ancient granite stone and a considerably more ancient clay tablet. The stone is the Rosetta

Stone, which dates back to 196 BC and was discovered in 1799, helping scholars to finally crack the code of hieroglyphics, the ancient Egyptian writing system.

Using the Rosetta Stone, the clay tablet was found to include a complaint in 1750 BC from a tradesman named Nanni to a merchant named Ea-Nasir. Nanni recounted a conversation with the merchant, who promised fine quality copper ingots but when Nanni's worker arrived to pick up the order he instead discovered low quality ingots. Nanni's representative told Nasir the equivalent of, "Dude, you promised the good stuff, and now you're ripping off my master." Hearing that, Nasir fired back: "I ain't got no time for you. If you want to take 'em, take 'em; if you don't want to take 'em, go away!" Whoa.

Getting this news, Nanni was furious. He demanded his money back and sent people to collect, who had to go through enemy territory...but Nasir refused the refund over and over. In the end, Nanni took the only legal recourse he felt he had left, to write on the Facebook of his day — a clay tablet, which I'm sure he placed prominently for people to see.

Ea-Nasir shafted Nanni almost 3,800 years ago, and reports of his unethical behavior plus crummy attitude is still making the rounds today.

Stories about bad customer service never go away. Don't forget that. If you don't believe me, just ask Ea-Nasir.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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